Meursault ID:: Cinq Assoc. West Section 3 & Don Quixote ID:: Cinq Assoc. South Section 5

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by Bordementions

Summary

In combat, every move is critical indeed... But I am of the opinion that there is one move that holds paramount importance.

A duelist's greatest opportunity is when the opponent attempts a furious charge.

Notes

I'm the worlds biggest meurdon truther and the world shall know my pain

Mircalla meurdon mnghmnmmn.,.,.,,,,,,,,.

Anywhos fluff time

Shameless plug
https://discord.gg/GPBNYYxExz

See the end of the work for more notes

Chapter 1

You push open the grand doors of the Cinq Association office, spectacle unlike any other. The lobby before you is adorned with banners of blue and white, the insignia of the dueling association proudly displayed. Chandeliers cast a regal glow upon the marble floors, and the rhythmic sound of rapiers clashing in the distance speaks of the skill honed within these walls. Cinq Assocation fixers clad in fencing attire pass by, some engaged in lively discussion, others meticulously tending to their weapons.

Your arrival however, does not go unnoticed. A ripple of murmurs spreads through the room, whispers carrying an air of intrigue and expectation. For your reputation proceeds you.

"Aye, that's them," someone mutters.

"They've turned down offers from Zwei and Shi already, haven't they?" another voice chimes in.

You pay them no heed. Your purpose is clear—to join the Cinq and cement yourself among the elite duelists of the association.

At the far end of the lobby, near an ornately carved desk, sit two people whose very presence is telling that they are more than just the average fixer.

One is a tall, broad-shouldered man, his slicked-back black hair giving way to sharp, disciplined features. His posture is impeccable, his expression unreadable, but his green eyes observe you with a precision that leaves little unchecked. Draped over his dark blue coat is a white fur-lined cape, fastened with a golden clasp—a clear mark of authority and status.

Beside him stands a stark contrast. A short woman with bright blonde hair cut into a bob, her deep hazel eyes gleaming with fervor. She wears a the ususal cinq outfit, a flamboyant navy-blue coat with white trim on the collar, and atop her head sits a wide-brimmed hat adorned with a two white feathers. Her stance is energetic, eager, as if she might burst into song at any moment.

The moment your gaze meets theirs, the blonde woman surges forward with unrestrained enthusiasm.

"Ah-ha! 'Tis thee, the paragon of combat they doth speak so highly of!" she declares, her voice brimming with flourish. "I am Don Quixote, Director of the South Section 5! And verily, I proclaim thee most fit to stand amongst my gallant comrades-in-arms!" She sweeps an arm before her as if presenting a grand vision of chivalry itself.

"Correction," the man beside her interjects, his voice calm, precise. "Your skills would be better utilized within the Cinq Association West, under my command. I am Meursault, Director of West Section 3." He regards you with unwavering scrutiny before continuing. "Your capabilities will be objectively evaluated through live dueling broadcasts. Combat data will be analyzed to ensure maximal efficiency."

Don Quixote gasps, staggering back as if struck by an invisible blade. "Thou wouldst reduce this warrior of peerless talent to a mere spectacle for the amusement of faceless onlookers? For shame, Meursault! True valor is not measured by the gaze of the masses, but by deeds wrought upon the battlefield!"

Meursault does not so much as blink at her theatrics. "Publicity is a fundamental aspect of contract acquisition. Your presence in structured dueling scenarios will result in greater exposure and, consequently, higher-value engagements."

Don Quixote recovers swiftly, pointing an accusatory finger at Meursault. "Hark! To shackle such raw potential within the confines of rigid assessment is an affront to the very spirit of dueling!" She turns back to you, eyes alight with conviction. "Nay, warrior, thou art meant for the thrill of righteous battle! South Section 5 doth patrol the Backstreets, ever vigilant, ensuring that justice and honor doth reign supreme!"

"Patrolling is an inefficient use of time," Meursault counters. "Dueling is best conducted in controlled conditions, allowing for proper analysis and improvement. Additionally, unnecessary skirmishes present avoidable risks."

Don Quixote scoffs. "Risks? Ha! What is a duel without risk? 'Tis the crucible in which true warriors are forged!"

You stand frozen, caught in the crossfire between the two directors, their words clashing like rapiers. Both of them stare at you with the intensity of duelists waiting for a move, expecting an answer you are not yet prepared to give.

Your silence does not deter them—if anything, it fuels their determination.

"Thy hesitation is proof enough!" Don Quixote exclaims, seizing your arm in a dramatic flourish and pulling you a step closer to her. "Thou dost yearn for the grand crusade that is South Section 5! With noble purpose shall we march upon the scoundrels and villains, rapiers in hand, meting justice swift and true!"

"That is an exaggeration," Meursault states, his hand gripping your opposite shoulder with a firm touch. Without effort, he pulls you back toward him, neutralizing Don Quixote's maneuver. "Justice is an abstract concept. Results are not. Under my command, your skills will be refined into the optimal duelist's form. Precision and efficiency are what distinguish true greatness."

Don Quixote gasps, pressing a gloved hand to her chest in mock offense. "Greatness? Thou speaketh of greatness as if it were but a matter of numbers and records! A soul of true mettle must be tested upon the streets, where valor is not confined to sanctioned duels but displayed through action!"

Meursault does not loosen his hold on you. "Sanctioned duels ensure a controlled environment where skill is measured accurately. Random street skirmishes introduce unnecessary variables, reducing combat effectiveness over time. Your potential would be wasted on inefficient engagements."

Don Quixote tightens her grip, physically pulling you back toward her with surprising strength. "Inefficient? The only inefficiency I see is a duelist shackled by tedious bureaucracy! What, shall they be expected to duel with a ledger in one hand and a rapier in the other? Pah! True warriors do not seek permission to fight—when the call to battle sounds, they answer!"

Meursault remains undeterred, smoothly guiding you back to his side once more. "Excessive engagements lead to fatigue and improper form. The accumulation of poorly executed duels fosters detrimental habits. Proper conditioning through structured combat scenarios is the logical path to mastery."

The back-and-forth struggle continues, neither side willing to yield, and in their fervor, you feel yourself being pulled back and forth as if you are no more than a ragdoll caught between two opposing forces. Don Quixote grips your wrist tightly, while Meursault maintains a

firm hold on your shoulder, neither allowing the other to claim you fully. A few fixers have stopped to watch the spectacle unfold, some whispering to each other, others simply enjoying the rare sight of two Cinq section heads locked in verbal—and near physical—combat.

"Thy talk of conditioning and structure rings hollow!" Don Quixote fires back, tugging at you once more. "A warrior of legend must be tempered in the fires of battle! The raw energy of combat courses through their veins, a thrill unmatched! South Section 5 shall provide thee with boundless opportunity to prove thy worth where it truly matters—amidst the unknown, where the wicked cower and justice prevails!"

Meursault, unbothered by the theatricality of her words, replies with cool certainty, adjusting his grip and pulling you once again toward his side. "Discipline is the foundation of true strength. Reckless excitement leads to miscalculations. If you wish to ascend to the pinnacle of dueling, you require precise training and structured improvement. West Section 3 will forge you into the sharpest blade, not a blunt instrument flailing in undirected fervor."

The tug-of-war over your allegiance persists, both directors determined to claim you for their own. Their gazes bore into you, demanding a choice, yet with every argument made, your indecision only deepens.

You shift awkwardly, caught between the two opposing forces as they continue their verbal battle, each gripping one of your arms to pull you closer to their respective sides. Don Quixote’s fingers dig into your sleeve with an almost childlike possessiveness, while Meursault’s grip is firm yet devoid of any unnecessary exertion, as though merely ensuring you do not slip away before the debate is settled.

"Thou art wasting this soul's potential, Meursault!" Don Quixote huffs, standing on her toes to close the height gap between her and the West Section director. "To live by rigid routine and cold observation is to snuff out the embers of passion before they may ignite! This valiant warrior is meant for the streets, where justice doth call!"

"Emotion has no bearing on efficiency," Meursault replies evenly, barely acknowledging Don Quixote’s attempts to tower over him. "A structured environment breeds refinement. Constant duels, recorded and reviewed, will optimize their abilities in measurable increments. Your method is inefficient and reckless."

"Reckless? Hah! At least I doth not parade my fixers as mere performers upon a stage! Thou wouldst make them a mannequin if you could!" Don Quixote retorts, her free hand jabbing a finger into Meursault's chest.

"A measurable record of success guarantees a steady influx of contracts. Your unpredictability ensures nothing but chaos," Meursault counters, his voice as flat as ever, but the way his grip tightens on your arm signals a rare flicker of irritation.

The two take a step closer to each other—unfortunately for you, that means you're now entirely pinned between them. Meursault's broad frame presses against one side, his posture unyielding, while Don Quixote leans in from the other, her hat nearly poking you in the face as she glares up at her rival. Their shoulders squeeze in from either side, robbing you of any chance of escape.

"Ghk—!" You try to shift, only to find yourself completely trapped.

"Ha! Methinks thou dost fear the unpredictable nature of a true knight!" Don Quixote taunts, seemingly unconcerned that you are now functionally serving as a human barrier between the two directors. "Admit it! Thine methods are dull, dry, bereft of spirit! The spark of battle is not to be caged within the confines of scheduled duels!"

"Results are what matter," Meursault states, voice calm yet pointed. "Your supposed 'spark' is merely inefficient expenditure of energy. If you wish to waste time chasing abstract concepts, do so with someone else. This one—" he tugs your arm, pulling you a fraction closer "—is better suited for structured refinement."

"Thou art a heartless machine!" Don Quixote gasps theatrically, doubling down on her grip and wrenching you back toward her side, making you stumble slightly. "But fret not, brave warrior! I shall not allow thee to be turned into a soulless automaton! Nay! With me, thou shalt know freedom and honor!"

Meursault exhales, as if already exhausted by this exchange. "Tch, honor. Their skill should be honed in an environment free from erratic distractions." His grip remains unyielding.

The back and forth continues, their voices rising, their bodies pressing tighter against you as neither refuses to yield ground. The pressure of being physically stuck between them, as well as their determination, makes it impossible to even get a word in, let alone make a decision.

Meursault and Don Quixote are now fully in each other's faces, their verbal jabs becoming more pointed with each exchange. You, meanwhile, remain helplessly wedged between them, barely able to breathe as their chests press in from either side.

"West Section 3 ensures discipline and refinement. This candidate does not require an excess of flamboyance to succeed." Meursault's voice letting even more edge to his words.

Don Quixote scoffs, flipping her cape with a dramatic flourish. "Flamboyance? Nay, Meursault, 'tis called passion! A Fixer without passion is but a mere puppet, devoid of spirit! Wouldst thou have this warrior spend their days as a lifeless tool, catering to the whims of dreary politicians?!"

"You speak as if discipline negates passion," Meursault states. "A misconception. Passion unfocused is merely childish theatrics."

"Hah! And what dost thou know of passion, thou stoic boulder?!" Don Quixote jumps up, her forehead nearly colliding with Meursault's. "Thy heart beats to the rhythm of numbers and statistics, whilst mine soars upon the winds of battle!"

You attempt to shuffle back, to perhaps reclaim some personal space, but you are quickly pulled back, having made no progress in your escape.

"Perhaps efficiency is simply beyond your comprehension." Meursault's voice remains utterly devoid of emotion.

Don Quixote freezes. Then, with a sharp inhale, she slowly removes one of her gloves.

Your stomach drops.

With a dramatic snap of her wrist, Don Quixote hurls the glove down at Meursault's feet. The sound echoes through the lobby.

"Aha! Thou hast left me no recourse, Meursault of West Section 3!" She takes a step back, raising her chin high. "I do hereby challenge thee to a duel! The victor shall claim this most esteemed warrior for their section!"

The entire room stills. Conversations halt. Fixers from across the hall turn, some gasping, others whispering excitedly.

Meursault, for his part, merely glances down at the glove before returning his gaze to Don Quixote. “A challenge over a recruitment decision is quite juvenile, is it not?”

“Cowardice, I see! Thou fearest my blade!”

Meursault exhales. “Incorrect. The terms are simply redundant. The superior section is already evident.”

Don Quixote’s eyes widen with pure offense. “Dost thou slander South Section 5?! Verily, I shall hear no more! You shall draw thy blade, knave!”

Before you can protest, Don Quixote seizes your wrist with surprising strength, her grip fueled by righteous indignation. "Come, my soon-to-be compatriot! Thou shalt bear witness to the moment of my glorious triumph!"

Not to be outdone, Meursault grips your other arm in a firm hold. "You will observe the results with impartiality. This decision must be made through performance, not rhetoric."

You barely have time to utter a word before they both start marching in unison, dragging you along as they storm toward the sparring arena. Your boots scrape against the polished floors as they pull you forward like two opposing warhorses, their combined force rendering resistance utterly futile.

The other Fixers watch with growing amusement, some murmuring wagers, others following in anticipation of the inevitable spectacle.

The sparring arena is a superb chamber, its wooden floor marked with boundaries for proper dueling engagements. Racks of ornate rapiers line the walls, each one immaculately maintained. The air hums with the energy of countless battles fought within these very walls.

At last, they stop before one of the grand spectator benches, finally agreeing on something—the necessity of you watching. In perfect synchronization, they release your arms, only to push you down onto the bench.

"You will observe," Meursault states.

"You shall bear witness to my irrefutable fencing abilities!" Don Quixote declares, already pacing toward the center of the arena.

The moment they turn away from you, you exhale, rolling your shoulders. The ordeal has left your arms slightly sore. You consider making a run for it, but the sheer number of Fixers gathering around the arena would make that a spectacle in it's own right.

Don Quixote unsheathes her rapier with a bow, striking a dramatic stance. "Meursault, thou art a foe most worthy! I shall grant thee the privilege of the first strike!"

Meursault steps onto the opposite side, drawing his blade in a single smooth motion. His stance is textbook perfect—an exact contrast to Don Quixote's. "A duel is not a privilege. It is a test of skill."

Tension crackles between them as they prepare to cross blades.

And you, still seated, can only watch as the fate of your career—your very future—rests in the outcome of a duel you never asked for.

However, the moment the duel begins, the air shifts. The murmurs of the onlookers fade into an expectant silence, all eyes locked onto the two combatants standing poised in the center of the arena.

Don Quixote moves first, lunging forward with reckless abandon, her rapier flashing in the light. "En garde, knave! Let our blades sing a ballad of glory!"

Meursault, ever the picture of efficiency, parries her strike with minimal movement, his expression unchanging. "Flaunting wastes energy." He counters with a sharp riposte, his blade gliding dangerously close to her shoulder.

You watch as they engage, their rapiers a blur of silver and steel, each strike and counter a display of their mastery. But something is off. Amidst their clashing blades, you catch it—fleeting glances thrown in your direction.

Don Quixote, in between a daring twirl and an exaggerated parry, flashes you a grin. "Dost thou see it? The South Section 5 demands not mere precision, but passion! Each strike is a testament to one's own inner resolve!" She punctuates her words with a dramatic thrust, forcing Meursault to sidestep with precise efficiency.

Meursault's response is as blunt as ever. "Your resolve will not win you a duel by itself. You must have the skills to make good on such a claim." His rapier moves in a clean, sharp arc, forcing Don Quixote onto the defensive. Even as he fights, he spares you a glance, his green

eyes briefly locking onto yours. "What matters is consistency." He presses his attack, his movements deliberate and measured, as if to showcase the sheer effectiveness of his method.

Don scoffs, disengaging with what could almost be called a somersault. "Hark! The spiritless words of a man who shan't ever know the thrill of righteous combat!" She suddenly advances with renewed vigor, her footwork light and unpredictable, her cape billowing behind her. Each step is an elegant dance, each slash a dramatic flare. And with every movement, she makes sure you are watching.

Meursault does not falter. His style is precise, each movement economic. He counters Don's erratic aggression with methodical precision, each strike cutting through her elaborate maneuvers with ruthless efficiency. But even so, you notice the subtle shift—his movements are sharper, more pronounced, as though making a deliberate point to you, demonstrating as to why control is necessary.

The duel escalates, both fighters subtly increasing the intensity. Don's strikes grow bolder, her footwork a mesmerizing display of controlled chaos, daring and unpredictable. Meursault remains unwavering, his parries precise, his counters relentless, the embodiment of pure efficiency.

Yet between every strike, every feint, every maneuver, they keep stealing glances at you.

They aren't just fighting to win. They're fighting to impress you.

You shift uncomfortably in your seat, hyper-aware of the weight of their expectations.

The gathered Fixers have also begun to notice the strange nature of the duel. Murmurs ripple through the audience.

You suppress a sigh, watching as Meursault and Don Quixote press forward, their duel becoming increasingly heated, each determined not only to claim victory—but to prove, undeniably, that their side is the right choice for you.

Their blades clashing with a rhythmic clang that reverberates through the sparring hall. Every movement carries the weight of their determination.

Don Quixote pivots on her heel, sweeping her rapier through the air with a laugh before launching into another spirited assault. "Tell me,

Meursault! When last didst thou feel thy blood alight with the flames of battle? The thrill of a duel is not found in efficiency—but found within thy heart that doth beat fervently for triumph!"

Meursault does not falter, his blade intercepting hers with a sharp clink, effortlessly redirecting the force of her strike. "Emotion clouds judgment. Heart alone does not dictate victory." With an aimed strike, he angles his rapier for a counterstrike, forcing Don Quixote back.

Don Quixote lets out a curse as she narrowly avoids a thrust, spinning away with an extravagant twirl that sends the feathers of her hat bobbing wildly. She steals a glance at you, eyes gleaming. "Lo! Dost thou see, noble aspirant? The grand display of skill and valor that doth define the South Section 5! In our ranks, thou shalt not be bound by dreary calculations, but lifted aloft by the winds of gallantry!"

Meursault's voice cuts through the room like the tip of his rapier. "Her unnecessary movements expose several vulnerabilities." His blade extends in a perfectly measured strike, catching Don's sleeve and nicking the fabric. He barely acknowledges the damage as he steps forward, voice cool and precise. "West Section 3 does not entertain such things. You will hone your skill through methodical discipline, ensuring consistency in all engagements." His gaze flickers toward you, his unreadable green eyes holding your own for a brief moment. "Your talent is wasted otherwise."

Don lets out a dramatic huff, cradling the small tear in her sleeve as if she had been grievously wounded. "A duel without spirit is no duel at all! Wouldst thou truly have our future comrade be shackled by such drudgery? Nay! They deserve the romance of battle, the thrill of clashing blades, the—"

She suddenly leaps into a renewed offensive, pushing Meursault back with a flurry of rapid, unpredictable strikes. Despite the intensity, she grins at you through the chaos, as if to say look at how exhilarating this is!

Meursault, unimpressed, weaves around her aggression with ease, his blade moving with surgical precision. He does not waste a single step, a single motion, every action thought down to the angle.

The duel drags on, their footwork growing more aggressive, their strikes more determined. The air in the room is thick with tension, but not just the kind that comes from combat. Every time you so much as shift in your seat, their gazes flicker toward you, gauging your

reaction, searching for signs of approval.

The audience has taken notice, exchanging amused glances.

"They're definitely trying to impress them."

"Should we tell them they're making it obvious?"

"Nah. This is the best entertainment we've had all week."

You exhale, rubbing your temples. This isn't just about a duel anymore. This is about you. And they have no intention of stopping until one of them emerges victorious.

Or, more likely—until you decide for them.

But soon the duel reaches its climax as both rapiers clash one final time, the force behind their strikes sending a sharp ring though the air. Then, in a moment of perfect stillness, they stop—Meursault's blade pressed lightly against Don Quixote's shoulder, and Don's rapier hovering just inches from his throat.

Neither dares to move.

The silence lingers, broken only by the slow exhale of breath from both duelists. Then, after a beat, Don dramatically steps back, lowering her weapon with a dramatic movement, pointing it away.

"A most exhilarating clash! Truly, a battle sung in the very language of steel!" she proclaims, though there's a twitch in her brow—she had not expected this to end without a decisive victor.

Meursault silently withdraws his rapier, sheathing it in one smooth motion. "Indeterminate outcome. Neither side obtained a clear advantage," he states matter-of-factly.

A draw.

The gathered Fixers murmur amongst themselves, some clearly disappointed at the lack of a conclusive finish. But the real tension still lingers—because if neither won, then who do you pick?

The two combatants take slow, measured steps toward you. Meursault smooths a hand over his sleeve, Don flicks a few strands of loose hair back beneath her hat, and both subtly—yet obviously—shift their posture in a way that practically screams 'Well?'

You don’t even get the chance to rise before Don Quixote, ever impatient, leans forward slightly, her hands on her hips.

"Aha! Surely thou didst witness my dazzling display of technique! The fervor of my strikes, the passion imbued within each piercing thrust! ’Tis evident, is it not? The heart doth yearn for what it finds most noble—and I ask thee, dear aspirant, what warrior couldst thou call more noble than I?"

She bats her lashes at you, lips curled into a confident, expectant grin.

Before you can utter a word, Meursault cuts in with an unshaken monotone. "Unnecessary embellishment. Efficiency in technique is the determining factor of skill." He meets your gaze, cool and impassive, yet his words carry a weight. "You witnessed the outcome firsthand. My form was superior in structural integrity and application. Your choice should be clear."

Don scoffs, crossing her arms. "Thou speakest of structure and application, yet didst thou not witness mine own prowess? The unchained spirit of battle? A warrior’s flair cannot be shackled by such dreary calculations!"

Meursault doesn’t even blink. "Your approach left openings. I simply chose not to exploit them."

Don gasps as if he just accused her of the highest treason. "Why, thou —!"

And suddenly, they’re not even looking at you anymore.

The argument escalates as they bicker over footwork, strike angles, and whether "flair" has any place in structured combat. The tension is palpable, but for all their heated debate, one thing is clear—they still expect an answer from you.

You exhale, glancing between them.

As their bickering continues, you sit there, caught in the crossfire of their endless debate. Every point one makes is swiftly countered by the other, and with each rebuttal, they throw not-so-subtle glances your way, waiting—demanding—some form of affirmation.

Meursault, perhaps sensing the futility of the conversation, exhales through his nose and turns to you. "Retrieve water."

It’s a simple command, delivered with the same tone one might use to instruct a subordinate to sharpen their blade. His green eyes remain as unreadable as ever, but there’s something oddly expectant in the way he looks at you, as if evaluating how swiftly you follow directions.

Before you can even rise, Don Quixote gasps so dramatically that you fear she’s been struck through with a rapier.

"Oh, the thirst!" she cries, stumbling toward you as if her very life depends on your immediate aid. She clutches your shoulder with both hands, her weight nearly toppling you as she drapes herself over you in clear agony.

"Alas, the duel hath drained me so! Mine throat, parched beyond reckoning! The cruel desert of combat hath left naught but sand in mine gullet!" Her eyes flutter shut as she leans against you, her entire body slackening as if she’s about to collapse outright. "Dost thou hear it? The frail beating of mine heart as I wither?"

You barely have time to process her exaggerated act before Meursault, who had yet to move from his spot, states with absolute certainty:

"She is lying."

Don begins faking tears, complaining louder this time, as if he had just cursed her family name. "Thou heartless fiend! Wouldst thou deny a weary warrior the relief of a single drop of water?"

Meursault, utterly unfazed, crosses his arms. "Your symptoms manifested only upon hearing about water. That is deception."

"Spite!" Don howls, now clutching you as if you’re the only thing keeping her from succumbing to this supposed dehydration. "Cruel, heartless spite! This is but a ploy to see me wither away, so that he may claim thee for his own!"

You’re fairly certain that she has not fought hard enough to be this dehydrated. In fact, you’re entirely convinced she’s doing this solely to make a scene.

Meursault, of course, remains entirely unimpressed. "You possess no signs of dehydration. Increased respiration rate and diminished stamina would have been visible during combat. You are exaggerating."

Don squints at him. Then, without missing a beat, she dramatically

falls against you even harder, one hand weakly clutching her chest. "I… I see a light… Could it be? My end…?"

Meursault stares at her in absolute silence, then, without looking at you, states: "Retrieve water only for yourself."

Don lets out a weak, pitiful noise, a sound so exaggeratedly sorrowful that you can't tell if she's mimicking a dying soldier or a forsaken heroine.

"But if thou leavest now," she murmurs, barely above a whisper, "I shall surely perish ere thou returnest…"

Meursault finally moves. He strides forward and, without a word, grabs Don by the back of her coat like a misbehaving child.

"Hark!" she cries, flailing as he drags her a few paces away. "What treachery is this?! Unhand me, thou villain!"

"You are wasting time."

"Fiend! Brute! O cruel fate, to be torn asunder from mine honored guest—"

"You are exaggerating again."

She gasps, twisting dramatically in his grasp. "I am not! I doth feel as though I am carried away by mine adversary, dragged unto the gallows, separated from thee—" She suddenly stops mid-sentence, eyes widening as realization dawns.

Meursault stops as well, watching impassively as she blinks, then turns back toward you with shocking speed.

"The duel!" she shouts, pointing an accusing finger at Meursault. "Thou seeketh to whisk me away so that I may forget! But lo, I shan't be deceived! This contest hath yet to be settled!"

Meursault releases her without resistance. "Correct. We will resume."

In an instant, Don spins away, shaking out her limbs and flexing her fingers as if shedding the exhaustion she had been dramatically feigning mere moments ago. She claps her hands together, excitement bursting from her as if she hadn't just been claiming to be on the brink of death.

"Verily! Our duel, fought in earnest! Once more, our blades shall

clash!" She turns to you, throwing an impassioned look over her shoulder. "Bear witness, my most esteemed candidate! Thou shalt soon see who is most deserving of thy membership!"

Meursault merely nods to you. "Observe carefully."

Before you can even think to protest, the two take their positions once more.

Then, with the same sharp precision as before, they launch themselves at each other again, rapiers flashing as the second bout begins.

The duel stretches on, far beyond what you would have expected. Strike after strike, parry after parry—their footwork remains precise, their movements controlled, yet neither one will yield.

Don Quixote lunges, her blade whistling through the air in an elegant arc as her feet leave the ground. Meursault deflects it with ease, pivoting to return a swift riposte aimed at her shoulder. She barely dodges, twisting her body at an unnatural angle before countering with a quick thrust toward his side.

The fight continues in a blur of flashing steel, neither combatant willing to give an inch. What started as a contest of skill has become something far more stubborn—neither is willing to concede defeat, not when the prize at stake is you.

Minutes turn to an hour. Then longer.

Their breathing grows heavier, their pristine coats now torn and marred with thin, red lines where rapiers have found flesh. Their footwork remains precise, but the exhaustion is setting in—Meursault's once-flawless stance now carries the weight of exertion, and Don Quixote, for all her fervor, is swaying slightly, barely holding herself back from leaning on her sword for support.

Yet still, neither one falls. Neither backs down.

You glance toward the other Fixers in the stands, who have long since given up trying to understand what's happening. Some had gathered with interest at first, but after the first hour, most had returned to their duties, occasionally glancing over and shaking their heads at the sheer absurdity of it all.

Finally, after what feels like an eternity, another Fixer—a senior-looking one with a gold earring—steps forward and calls out,

“Enough! The duel is inconclusive! Call it off before you both collapse where you stand.”

Neither of them moves for a moment. It’s as if they haven’t even heard the declaration.

Then, after a long silence, Meursault lowers his rapier, his expression unreadable as always. "...A draw," he states simply.

Don lets out a tired, frustrated breath, pressing her blade into the ground for support. "Tch! ‘Tis most vexing… Yet I shall accept such a decree, for the time being."

With great reluctance, they both sheath their weapons.

Slowly, they return to the stands, and without thinking, you instinctively grab the nearby sparring medical kit. The cuts littering their bodies—small but numerous—need tending to.

"You first," you say, though you're not sure which of them you're speaking to.

Without hesitation, Don Quixote plops herself down in your lap. "Ah! The cruel sting of battle doth linger still! Yet fear not, for I shall endure!"

Meursault sits down at your side, silent and still, waiting patiently for his turn as if he doesn’t even register the wounds decorating his skin.

You sigh, beginning to bandage them up, realizing that—despite the outcome of the duel—you’re still no closer to choosing between them. And judging by the way they’re still occasionally throwing glares at each other, neither one intends to give up any time soon.

But even as you wrap the bandages around Don Quixote’s arm, she refuses to sit still. She shifts closer—far closer than necessary—until her back brushes against your chest, her breath still heavy from exertion. A light flush dusts her cheeks, whether from the heat of battle or something else entirely, you can't tell.

“Ah… how kind thou art, to bestow thy care upon this weary warrior," she murmurs, resting her uninjured arm against your shoulder. "But verily, dear comrade, dost thou not see? It is I who shall suit thee best! A life with me is one of glory! Adventure! Of camaraderie unbroken!"

Before you can respond, a firm grip encircles your wrist. Meursault, silent as ever, has caught hold of you as you're reaching for more bandages. His hand is strong, his grasp steady—not forceful. His expression remains unreadable, but there's something in his gaze, something smoldering beneath that cool facade, as he pulls you slightly closer to him.

Before you can even process it, Don Quixote lets out a scandalized gasp, yanking you back toward her. "Unhand them, thou fiend! 'Tis most dishonorable to seize our esteemed guest so callously!"

"You are exaggerating," Meursault replies, but his grip on you does not loosen.

Your body is caught between them, jostled back and forth as they continue their argument, neither willing to yield—not even now, as sweat clings to their skin, their bodies still burning with the heat of battle. Every shift, every tug sends you pressing up against them, the warmth of their bodies seeping into your own. The scent of sweat and exertion is thick against you, the aftermath of their prolonged duel leaving both of them breathless, flushed, and yet somehow, still unwilling to let this go.

Don presses herself closer, her fingers latching onto the collar of your coat as she peers up at you with an impassioned expression. "Dost thou not long for gallantry? For a life unfettered by the constraints of mere thought? Ah, how joyous it would be! We, together, in pursuit of noble endeavors!"

Meursault, on the other hand, keeps his hold firm, yet undeniably possessive. His green eyes bore into you, unwavering. "A life of practicality will ensure your survival in this world. Delusions will not."

The intensity between them is suffocating, and you suddenly feel very aware of just how close you are to both of them, your body pressed between their heated forms, your breath coming just a little quicker under the weight of their attention.

They're still arguing—still pulling you back and forth—but at this point, you can hardly focus on the words.

You entertain them long enough to get them both suitably patched up.

As the heat of their argument finally simmers down, replaced by exhaustion from their prolonged duel, both Meursault and Don Quixote slump slightly where they sit. Their breath is still uneven,

beads of sweat clinging to their flushed skin, but the fire of competition has yet to fully fade from their eyes. Instead, it shifts—redirected toward a different battle.

Their stomachs growl.

Don Quixote clutches her midsection with a wince. “Ah, what a most arduous battle! Mine very soul doth cry out for sustenance, for replenishment after such exertion!” Then, as if struck by divine revelation, she whirls to face you, eyes gleaming with renewed intensity. “Verily, my dear comrade, thou must accompany me! A feast most grand shall be had in celebration of our honorable contest!”

Meursault, undeterred by, merely adjusts his collar and states, “You should accompany me instead. I know a restaurant with high nutritional value and a precise balance of proteins and carbohydrates.” He meets your gaze, but there’s a certain insistence in his tone. “You must recover properly after today’s exertion.”

“Ha! Speak not of numbers and values, Meursault! ‘Tis the spirit that must be nourished! And what better than a fine soufflé, where fruit and cream doth flow ever so delicious?”

“Overconsumption of sugars will combat efficiency,” Meursault counters, as if it’s the most obvious thing in the world. “A place with proper portion control is more suitable.”

Don gasps. “What villainy is this? Wouldst thou deny our dear companion the pleasure of indulgence?”

You take a deep breath as they bicker yet again, their words going back and forth like another duel—this time fought with dinner plans.

"Why not just go wherever I want?" you attempt to interject, but the moment the words leave your mouth, their focus sharpens on you once more.

“Then thou shalt accompany me!” Don Quixote exclaims, seizing your arm.

“No,” Meursault states plainly, taking hold of your other arm. “You will come with me.”

You barely have time to react before they both start dragging you off.

And it doesn’t stop at just dinner.

One moment, you're being whisked through the lively streets of the City, Don Quixote animatedly pointing out various restaurants with her puppy like eyes, Meursault calmly redirecting toward locations that are more suited towards your diet.

Next, they’re buying things for you.

A navy-blue coat, much like theirs? “A perfect addition to thine ensemble!” Don insists, holding it up against you with a grin.

A high-quality dueling glove, custom-fitted? “You require proper gear,” Meursault states as he slides a pair into your hands without waiting for approval.

They argue over food, over clothes, over which places suit you better, and in their growing desperation to win you over, they start outright feeding you.

Don Quixote, holding up a skewer of grilled meat, eyes shining with excitement. “Taste this! A most wondrous delight, fit for the grandest of knights!”

Meursault, pressing a carefully portioned meal into your hands. “This is nutritionally balanced. Eat.”

They aren't just arguing anymore—they're fawning over you.

And, as you are jostled between them, tugged along as they each attempt to one-up the other in an increasingly ridiculous battle of gestures.

Despite their relentless tug-of-war over you though, the further you all wander through the district, the more limited the options become. As the night deepens, the only places still open are local bars and taverns, their neon signs flickering in the dim city glow.

Don Quixote, spotting a lively establishment with an old-world charm, declares, "Lo! The eve demands revelry! What knightly fellowship is complete without spirits to warm the soul?"

Meursault, though initially reluctant, seems to calculate the dwindling choices and eventually concedes. “Alcohol in moderation may promote social bonding,” he states matter-of-factly.

And thus, the three of you step inside.

It begins simple enough—a meal, a drink or two, a continuation of their ongoing verbal duel. But as time ticks forward, so does the count of emptied glasses on the table.

Don, lively as ever, is animated even while drinking, slamming down her cup with a grand announcement after each sip and gesturing wildly as she speaks. “Truly, ‘tis a night most grand! A tale worthy of song! And I shall tell it thus—‘The Legendary Duel for a Most Illustrious Companion!’” She throws an arm over your shoulders, laughing.

Meursault, for all his usual restraint, does not seem entirely immune either. Though still composed, a telltale flush dusts his face, and his speech—usually so sharp and to the point—has slowed, his words more eager. “An unnecessary embellishment. The results of the duel remain inconclusive. It was a draw.”

"An incredible draw!" Don corrects, raising her glass once more.

Somewhere along the way, the sight of two high-ranking Cinq Association Fixers—and you, caught between them—has drawn quite the audience. Other patrons watch, some murmuring in amusement, others whispering in intrigue.

The energy of the room has shifted; people are paying attention, watching for the next spectacle. But at this point, neither Meursault nor Don Quixote seems to notice—or care.

Another round. More insistent jabs. The two of them leaning in closer as they speak—though whether it’s from the drink or their continued competition is unclear. And suddenly the energy in the bar is reaching a fever pitch, the growing crowd of onlookers now fully invested in the spectacle of the two dueling captains.

With the music swelling, the rhythmic clatter of boots against the wooden floor, and the haze of alcohol, it doesn’t take much encouragement before someone—perhaps a particularly bold fixer—raises their voice above the din.

"C’mon, Cinq! Let’s see if you can dance as well as you fight!"

The challenge is met with resounding cheers, and whether it’s the liquor in their veins or the unrelenting desire to outdo each other, Don Quixote and Meursault do not refuse.

Don, already perched precariously on her chair, hops down and

flourishes her cape dramatically. “Ah-ha! A most excellent suggestion! For what is combat but the poetry of movement? And thus, shall I—nay, we—grace this floor with a display of unparalleled splendor!”

Meursault, sluggish but ever unflinching, merely stands and adjusts his coat. “Tactics apply to all forms of engagement. Dance is no exception.”

And just like that, you are dragged into it.

At first, it’s Don twirling you onto the floor with reckless enthusiasm, hands firm on your shoulders as she guides you into the lively rhythm of the music. Her footwork is swift, elegant despite the intoxication, but there’s a lack of restraint in her movements that sends you stumbling more than once. She laughs, a carefree, exhilarated sound, pulling you close before spinning you away again. “O, what joy! What revelry! Dost thou not feel it? The rush of the duel, yet with none of the steel!”

Before you can answer, you’re tugged away—Meursault now taking the lead. His grip is steady, controlled, and though his movements are precise, he’s clearly trying his best to show genuine affection in his demeanor. The beginnings of a slight smile, the energetic movements of his hands, yet he is just as direct, efficient steps that somehow still maintain an air of grace. “Your form is acceptable,” he remarks, eyes softer than usual. “Adjust your footing to help maintain balance.”

The crowd whoops and cheers at the sight of the two Cinq captains passing you back and forth like a prized trophy, the competition between them never once fading. Each time Don pulls you into another rapid spin, Meursault seamlessly intercepts, leading you into a measured turn. Their hands on you, firm and insistent, keep you moving between them, the warmth of their bodies pressing into yours in the ever-growing chaos.

The music pounds louder. The voices of the crowd meld into one excited roar.

And through it all, the two of them remain fixated on each other, locked in this absurd, impromptu battle for dominance. But alas even the most seasoned warriors have their limits.

The heat of the dance floor, the weight of the night’s many drinks, and the sheer intensity of their prolonged duel—both in blade and in movement—finally catches up to the two captains. Their steps begin to slow, their once-graceful footwork turning into something sluggish

and unsteady. Don Quixote, who could be mistaken for a performer, still attempts to maintain her usual eccentric moves, but even she is beginning to sway with exhaustion. Meursault, for all his endurance, exhales a quiet sigh, the faint signs of sleepiness finally showing on his usually impassive face.

With one final flourish, Don stumbles to a stop, throwing out her arms as if to command the crowd one last time. “Behold! The dance of champions reaches its noble end!” she proclaims, voice slightly slurred but no less grand.

Meursault straightens, brushing a hand against the sweat gathering at his brow. "An effective usage of exertion," he states flatly, though he makes no attempt to deny his own fatigue.

The audience cheers regardless, celebrating the absurd spectacle of two dueling Cinq captains engaging in a battle of skill, pride, and sheer stubborn will—one that, much like their initial bout, has once again ended without a victor.

With breathless laughter and lingering warmth from the crowded bar, the three of you stumble out onto the quiet streets of the district. The crisp night air is a welcome contrast to the heat of the tavern, a gentle breeze brushing against your sweat-damp skin. The streets are nearly empty now, save for the occasional flicker of lantern light in the distance.

Don Quixote stretches her arms high above her head before dramatically slumping against you, resting her weight on your shoulder. “Ah, but we have been betrayed by time itself! Our mighty struggle hath left us stranded, for to return to Cinq Headquarters now would be an arduous journey most dire!”

You blink, her words slow to process through the haze of exhaustion and alcohol. “…What?”

Meursault, standing at your other side, crosses his arms. “HQ is several districts away. The transit routes are closed for the night.”

Don, sensing an opportunity, suddenly stands upright again, clapping her hands together. “Then it is settled! A hero must always find shelter where they may, and lo! Have we not passed yon esteemed establishment of rest mere moments prior?”

You follow her gaze to where she gestures—toward a nearby hotel, its warm lights promising a bed far closer than the ones waiting at Cinq’s

headquarters.

Meursault eyes the building, then glances at you. “An acceptable outcome.”

Before you can even react, Don latches onto your arm, her grin triumphant. “Huzzah! Then onwards, my valiant companions! We shall rest, and on the morrow, continue our—” She hiccups, pausing for just a moment before recovering flawlessly. “—most noble contest for thee!”

You exhale slowly. This night just won’t end, will it?

The hotel room is modest but comfortable—two neatly made beds sit opposite each other, bathed in the warm glow of a bedside lamp. The air carries the lingering scent offresh linen, a sta rk contrast to the sweat and alcohol clinging to your skin.

Despite the exhaustion tugging at your limbs, the moment the door shuts behind you, Don Quixote spins on her heel, raising a finger. “Now then! A true knight must claim the most honorable position of rest!”

Meursault, already tugging off his fur-lined cape merely raises an eyebrow. “That is irrelevant. There are two beds.”

You groan, rubbing at your temples. "Then it's settled. You take one, and I’ll—"

Before you can finish, Don dramatically throws herself onto the closest bed, stretching out as if claiming it as her personal domain. “Then, dear comrades, it is only fitting that we—” She pauses, eyes flickering between you and Meursault before her grin turns smug. “—rest together, as true companions do!”

Meursault having clearly understood that there was no rhyme or reason to this woman, doesn’t even look up as he unfastens his coat.

Yet, despite his words, when Don shifts over—clearly making space—he does not protest as you are dragged down onto the mattress alongside her. You barely have time to register the warmth of her body against yours before Meursault follows suit, lying down on your other side, gently cradling his arms around you.

The bed, meant for two at best, is hardly enough for three. Limbs press together, the heat of exhausted bodies seeping through layers of

clothing. Don's head rests against your shoulder, her breath warm and slow against your neck. Meursault, silent as ever, is a steady presence at your back, the faint rise and fall of his chest the only indication of his waning consciousness.

In the dim light, Don shifts slightly, tilting her head up to you. Her eyes, though heavy with sleep, still hold that same spark of mischief. "We shall battle for thee again on the morrow…" she murmurs, her voice softer now, Meursault doesn't speak, but as you glance his way, you catch the faintest movement—his gaze, still half-lidded, watching you in quiet consideration.

Then, without hesitation, Don leans up and presses a small, fleeting kiss to your cheek, her lips brushing your skin with surprising gentleness. The contact is barely a second before she sinks back against you, sighing contentedly.

Meursault, perhaps moved by some unseen thought, mirrors the action. A brief, firm press of lips to your temple before he settles in once more, his breath steady against your hair.

You exhale, your body growing heavier as sleep finally drags you under.

Between them—warm, drowsy, and utterly spent—you close your eyes.

Perhaps you would hold off on this decision for as long as you can.

End Notes

Ough I wanna...

I want don to push my head don and smother my face in those big man titties while her and meur kiss bleh :3c

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